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Dr. Philip Baczewski is the guest columnist this month and he addresses some Y2K issues on the Academic Mainframe.

[Y2K -- A Minor Hiccup or
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Since the millennium is almost upon us, Coy Hoggard, Senior Director of Administrative Computing and UNT Y2K Remediation Coordinator has set about to remind us just what all the Y2K fuss is about.

[Y2K Links](#)

Want to know more about the Year 2000 Problem? This page provides you with links to Web sites which contain interesting and useful Y2K information.

[Junk Mail and Hoax Viruses](#)

Read this article and then forward it to all of your friends. Really!

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There are guidelines for Web publishing at the University of North Texas. Please review these guidelines to determine if your site is compliant.

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UNT's new search engine has a slightly different look and feel from the previous version. Shane Jester of Central Web Support gives you some tips on ways to retrieve more accurate information from the search engine.

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RSS Matters

By [Craig Henderson](#), Research and Statistical Support Services

A Report on the S-Plus User's Conference, October 1999

I recently had the privilege of attending the S-Plus User's Conference in New Orleans. This was a very intimate gathering; there were approximately 300 attendees, and the major software developers were present. The informal atmosphere allowed for easy access to users of all levels. I would like to report to you some of what I was able to attend while present.

While I was there I was able to spend some time at the S-Plus User's Conference. There were three main emphases throughout the conference, one geared toward communicating some of the new developments of S-Plus 2000, one geared toward introducing the S-Plus StatServer, and one geared toward communicating new statistical developments. Some of the biggest names in applied statistics were present such as Rob Tibshirani, Frank Harrell, William Venables, and Brian Ripley. I found the conference to be a very informative and helpful experience.

S-Plus 2000

Much development has gone into expanding the menu capabilities in S-Plus 2000. This has been done primarily to make the software more user-friendly for new users. The statistics dialog boxes have been redesigned to make more available from the GUI interface. In addition, tips of the day are available at start-up and data tips are available from the mouse cursor. The idea behind these developments is to give S-Plus 2000 "an Office 98 look and feel". However, the vast majority of users and developers agreed that to really use S-Plus as it was intended to be used, knowledge of the command language is essential.

There have also been developments of new graphical procedures and improved statistics. New graphics available in S-Plus 2000 include HLOC plots, nonlinear curve fitting plots, combined vertical/horizontal error bar charts, and Smith charts. The smoothing options available have also been expanded. A strength of S-Plus has always been the development of advanced, modern statistical techniques. S-Plus 2000 has lived up to this reputation, contributing state of the art linear and nonlinear mixed effects modeling and updated survival analysis. S-Plus 2000 also has a discriminant function analysis option that has not been previously available. However, it was advised in another session to use logistic regression rather than discriminant analysis, since the assumptions of discriminate analysis are so restrictive.

S-Plus 2000 has also incorporated some of the more popular user-written libraries into its core features. This includes Venables and Ripley's MASS library and Frank Harrell's hmisc and design libraries. Other developments include more examples in the available documentation, and HTML on-line help, available under the S-Plus object hierarchy. S-Plus 2000 has also addressed

some historical performance problems. By default, S-Plus now checks to see whether your system is an Intel Pentium processor, and if so, uses Intel's Math Kernel Library BLAS routines (in SHOME/cmd/mkl_intf.dll). These routines are optimized for Intel Pentiums, and thus significant speed-up should be observed in certain S-Plus operations (such as matrix multiplication) that call BLAS routines. Significant speed-up of certain operations can be obtained when using a Pentium multi-processor machine.

StatServer

S-Plus advertises their as follows "StatServer is a statistical data mining system for distributing analyses and graphics to decision-makers. It is designed to help non-statistician users discover patterns and trends hidden in corporate databases. StatServer enables better, more informed decision making throughout organizations." I attended one session on StatServer conducted by a research scientist for Merck Research Laboratories. The dominant perspective for their division in employing StatServer is "Instead of the statistician as 'qualified specialist' doing data analysis for us, we prefer advice and tools from statisticians in order to do it ourselves." Having a desktop computer running Windows 98 with Excel and Netscape, their clients are able to submit jobs to the StatServer. The StatServer, which uses S-Plus as the processing engine, in turn outputs editable output, graphics, and tables to the web browser of the local computer. Merck laboratories was then able to focus their efforts on automating routines useful to their customers, and allowing their customers to do the analyses themselves, as opposed to hiring a full-time statistical consultant. This model seemed useful to me for large consulting firms, but I did not see much application for most professors functioning in the academic environment.

Statistical Development

Perhaps the most useful portion of the conference for me was the information presented on developments of statistical techniques. I was able to attend a one day workshop delivered by Brian Ripley that was very instructive. He built on the theme of his book, Modern Data Analysis in S-Plus, to demonstrate how modern analysis techniques such as smoothing splines and automated transformations could be used in the context of regression, robust regression, mixed effect models, etc. Rather than belaboring the details, I will forward you to Brian Ripley's Website in which he has the slides from his presentation along with the S-Plus scripts used to run the analyses. The URL is: <http://www.stats.ox.ac.uk/pub/bdr/NewOrleans99/>. Tim Hesterberg also presented some very interesting work on improving the performance of bootstrapping by sampling from the empirical distribution with unequal probabilities. He presented data that suggests that bootstrap tilting has a 17:1 iteration advantage versus bootstrap empirical limits and a 37:1 advantage versus BCa limits. His paper and software for doing bootstrap tilting is available at <http://www.statsci.com/Hesterberg/tilting>. Jose Pinheiro from Bell Laboratories also presented a paper on the mixed effects and nonlinear mixed effects modules available in S-Plus. These modules allow the user great flexibility in analyzing mixed effects models, including the ability to analyze repeated measures, longitudinal data, growth curves, and multilevel modeling. The thing that particularly stands out about these modules is the ability to do nonlinear modeling. The NLME library, which contains the software to do these analyses, is available from <http://nlme.stat.wisc.edu>.

But I won't kid myself, the best part about the trip was spending the weekend in New Orleans. I enjoyed some great jazz, some great food, and a cultural experience that only New Orleans can offer. It was even uncharacteristically cool for that time of year. Jealous? As always, if I can be of any assistance, please contact me at 565-2140, or email craigh@unt.edu.

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Network Connection

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing

Dr. Baczewski is taking a break from the "Network Connection" this month. We thought a reprise of this column from [January](#) would go nicely with the "[Junk Mail and Hoax Viruses](#)" article in this issue. -- Ed.

It's a Myth

A friend of mine once told me a story which he swore was absolutely true. It really happened to this mother of a cousin of a friend of his. It seems that a woman noticed an ad in the paper selling a luxury sedan for \$50. After calling the number listed and setting an appointment to see the car, she brought her auto-knowledgeable son to look it over, and seeing a late model car in mint condition, they immediately wrote a check for \$50 to the woman who placed the ad. But their curiosity got the best of them and they asked why such a low price for the car. The reply was that the seller's husband had run off with his secretary, asked her to sell the car and send him the money. It's a great story, but in spite of my friend's assertion, it is absolutely false. It is what's called an urban myth. (Author Jan Harold Brunvand wrote a series of books about urban myths, the first of which is called "The Vanishing Hitchhiker," W.W. Norton & Company, February 1989, ISBN: 0393951693).

The Myth of the Internet

Perhaps these types of tales are so alluring because we want to believe they are true. They seem to resonate with fears and beliefs that we all carry as we navigate through the world. Even well educated and otherwise skeptical people often accept such stories as fact and retell them to their friends. With the Internet age, a whole set of myths has developed on and around the Internet. It seems that the Internet makes the transmission of these stories even easier and faster than before, and it also provides a source for new stories. The following unattributed e-mail transmission I received references a number of the more well known myths that have sprung up on and been perpetuated over the Internet:

I know this guy whose neighbor, a young man, was home recovering from having been served a rat in his bucket of Kentucky Fried Chicken. So anyway, one day he went to sleep and when he woke up he was in his bathtub and it was full of ice and he was sore all over. When he got out of the tub he realized that HIS KIDNEYS HAD BEEN STOLEN and he saw a note on his mirror that said "Call 911!" But he was afraid to use his phone because it was connected to his computer, and there was a virus on his computer that would destroy his hard drive if he opened an e-mail entitled "Join the crew!" He knew it wasn't a hoax because he himself was a computer programmer who was working on software to save us from Armageddon when the year 2000 rolls around. His program will prevent a global disaster in which all the computers get together and distribute the \$600 Neiman Marcus cookie recipe under the leadership of Bill Gates. (It's true! I read it all last week in a mass e-mail from BILL GATES HIMSELF, who was also promising me a free Disneyworld vacation and \$5,000 if I would forward the e-mail to everyone I know.) Anyway, the poor man then tried to call 911 from a pay phone to report his missing kidneys, but reaching into the coin-return slot he jabbed himself with an HIV-infected needle around which was wrapped a note that said, "Welcome to the world of AIDS." Luckily he was only a few blocks

from the hospital--the one, actually, where that little boy who is dying of cancer is, the one whose last wish is for everyone in the world to send him an e-mail and the American Cancer Society has agreed to pay him a nickel for every e-mail he receives. I sent him two e-mails and one of them was a bunch of x's and o's in the shape of an angel (if you get it and forward it to twenty people you will have good luck but ten people you will only have ok luck and if you send it to less than ten people you will have BAD LUCK FOR SEVEN YEARS). So anyway, the poor guy tried to drive himself to the hospital, but on the way there he noticed another car driving along without it's lights on. To be helpful, he flashed his lights at the other car and was promptly shot as part of a gang initiation. And it's a little-known fact that the Y1K problem caused the Dark Ages.

Debunking the Myths

It is amazing to me that otherwise intelligent and technically competent people will forward e-mail virus warnings and Bill Gates e-mail test program messages without applying enough skepticism to think through whether or not they could be true. The common thread is that most of these stories get passed on through e-mail in an informal manner. Some are actually harmful because they transmit misinformation for which companies must spend much time and resources to deny or correct.

Fortunately for skeptics everywhere, a couple of good web pages will help debunk the myths. The Urban Legends and Folklore Web Page found at <http://urbanlegends.miningco.com/mbody.htm> covers a number of urban myths and Internet hoaxes. You'll find a number of popularized stories refuted amongst the documentation on this page. The Computer Virus Myths Home Page (<http://www.kumite.com/myths/>) does a similar job on those mythical e-mail viruses that reportedly can erase your hard drive. This page can help sort out the real threats from the imagined ones.

The folks who write a popular e-mail newsletter called The Internet Tourbus (<http://www.tourbus.com/>) have compiled what they call the "Urban Legends Combat Kit" (<http://netsquirrel.com/combaitkit/>) This not only provides information about currently popular myths and hoaxes, but also provides suggested response letters that you can send to those who forward the dire warnings to your e-mail inbox.

Armed with the resources above, even an Internet novice can test the veracity of many of the stories that are transmitted via e-mail. Sometimes a dose of skepticism can be good and prevent us from compounding a problem or discouraging people from using the Internet by reinforcing their fears of a often unfamiliar online environment. After all, we need to spend our time on more important matters, like solving the Y10K problem.

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Each month we highlight one Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list or Website.

Britannica.com Newsletters

In case you haven't heard, Encyclopedia Britannica has hit the Web in a big way. Not only is the entire Encyclopedia Britannica online but all sorts of other information services are being offered at <http://www.britannica.com/> See the company's description of its services, below, for an idea of what you can expect when visiting their site:

Britannica.com is a free knowledge and learning center for people who seek thoughtful and engaging context to today's affairs. Only Britannica.com lets users simultaneously search the world's most respected encyclopedia, expert reviews of the Web's best sites, timely articles from leading magazines, and Books in Print. Special interactive features extend these resources to create a distinctive, authoritative Internet destination.

Britannica.com includes the complete, updated Encyclopædia Britannica, the oldest and largest general reference in the English language. Selected articles from more than 70 of the world's top magazines--including Newsweek, Discover, and The Economist--provide additional feature and current-events coverage. Our guide to the Web's best sites includes more than 125,000 sites, and you can also search the text of more than 100 million Web pages to find more information. The Books in Print database is available through Britannica.com, and you can follow links from these citations to order books online from Barnes & Noble. All these databases, including a collection of special online Spotlights, can be accessed through a single search.

World and U.S. news from the editors of washingtonpost.com is updated around the clock. With market data and weather forecasts, Britannica.com is an ideal Internet gateway.

The Britannica.com Store includes a selection of quality Britannica.com products, such as Britannica CD 2000, as well as other merchandise in our Knowledge Collection.

One of the choices you are given on the Britannica.com main page (top, right-hand corner) is to subscribe to the following E-mail newsletters. Just click on the subscribe line and you are sent to a subscription form which allows you to choose one or all of the newsletters.

- **In the Know** - A digest of new features on Britannica.com, delivered weekly.
- **Movable Type** - The world of books explored through quotes and trivia,

delivered weekly.

- **Deep Background** - Quotes, facts, and statistics to give you perspective on the news, delivered weekly.
- **Site of the Day** - Expect the unexpected from this Web feature, delivered every weekday.

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By [Mark Wilcox](#), Campus Web Administrator

Onward through the fog . . .

Not much news this month. I'm still at work on the Bulk E-mail project we talked about [last month](#). I have been selected to speak at the Apache 2000 conference in March on LDAP and Apache. This conference is sponsored by the Apache Software Foundation, who is the organizational structure responsible for the Apache Web server software. The Apache server is by most people's counts, the most popular Web server in use today. More information about the conference can be found at <http://www.apachecon.com/> .

Until next time.

Mark

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Short Courses

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks* Editor

There are still a few short courses available this semester. It is not too late to sign up for classes in S-Plus, Creating a Homepage with Netscape, and New Technologies for Survey Research II. These classes are all **free** for UNT students, faculty, and staff members. Please consult the [Short Courses](#) page for course descriptions and registration.

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses from ACS, geared to their class needs. Other groups can request special courses also. Contact ACS for more information (ISB 119, 565-4068, lynch@unt.edu).

Especially for Faculty and Staff Members

In addition to the [ACS Short Courses](#), which are available to students, faculty and staff, staff and faculty members can take courses offered through the [Human Resources](#) Department, the [Center for Distributed Learning](#), and the UNT Libraries' [Multimedia Development Lab](#).

Center for Distributed Learning

The Center for Distributed Learning offers courses especially for Faculty Members. Topics include Windows 95, PowerPoint, Video Conferencing, and a series of classes concerning putting course materials on the World Wide Web using WebCT®.

The center offers a "Brown Bag" series which meets for lunch the first Thursday of each month at Noon in ISB 204. The purpose of this group is to bring faculty members together to share their experiences with distributed learning. One demonstration will be made at each meeting by a faculty member with experience in distributed learning. Each meeting is followed, for those interested in using WebCT®, by a one hour orientation for beginners in ISB 203. More information on these activities can be found at the [Center for Distributed Learning](#) Web site.

UNT Libraries'

The UNT Libraries' Multimedia Development Lab has also offered free training to all University of North Texas faculty and staff in the basics of FrontPage 98 and information architecture in the past. For more information visit the Multimedia Development Lab's home page at <http://www.library.unt.edu/mmdl>

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Technical Training

Technical Training for campus network managers is available through the Campus-Wide Networks division of the Computing Center. Some of the [seminars](#), such as one on disaster recovery/business continuity planning techniques, may be of interest to others on campus as well.

Alternate Forms of Training

The [Training](#) Web site has all sorts of information about alternate forms of training. Training tapes, Computer Based Training ([CBT](#)) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered. There are also handouts for computer training (Microsoft Office 97 and Windows 95) on the following topics:

- GroupWise 5.2 -- Handout for Win95/NT
- FAQ for GroupWise 5.2
- Info on GroupWise for Win3.1
- Computers - Back to the Basics
- Introduction to Windows 95
- Introduction to Word 97
- Advanced Word 97 - MailMerge It Together
- Introduction to Excel 97
- Introduction to PowerPoint 97
- Introduction to Remedy (THE Call-Tracking Program)
- Using Netscape Communicator and the UNT Home Page

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IRC News

Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey,
Recording Secretary



IRC Regular Voting Members: Judith Adkison, College of Education; Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Donna Asher, Administrative Affairs; Sue Byron, Faculty Senate; Carolyn Cunningham, Student Affairs; Jim Curry, Academic Administration; David Griffiths, Student Association; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, Administrative Program Group; Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner, Standards & Cooperation Program Group; Allen Livingston, Graduate Student Council; Dan Mauldin, University Planning Council; Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services, GALMAC; Jon Nelson, College of Music; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Steve Oeffner, UNT Health Science Center; Russ Pensyl, School of Visual Arts; Patrick Pluscht, Distributed Learning Team; Mark Rorvig, Research Program Group; Paul Schlieve, Communications Program Group; Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Philip Turner, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for Distance Education and Dean of the School of Library and Information Resources (Chair, IRC);; Virginia Wheeless, Chancellor; John Windsor, College of Business. **IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members:** Leslie Bowden, Telecommunications; Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Michael Forster, UNT Health Science Center; Richard Harris, Computing Center; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary). [As of 9/99]

No new IRC minutes were available at publication time. To see past IRC minutes, consult our [back issues](#).

IRC Meeting Schedule

The [IRC](#) generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in the Administration Building Board Room. Planned exceptions to this schedule are that December meeting be moved to Dec. 14; that the May meeting will be moved to May 9 and the August will meeting be moved to August 8.

All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.

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Staff Activities

Transitions

We welcome the following new employees:

- **Nantawat Uswachoke**, VM System Programmer in Mainframe Technical Services.
- **Marcus Carlisle**, I/O operator (part-time).
- **Adam Rubenstein**, I/O operator (part-time).

The following people no longer work in the Computing Center:

- **Mithoon Karam**, I/O Consultant (part-time).
- **Shobha Kasireddy**, Report Distribution Clerk (part-time).
- **Steven Bauer**, Telecommunications Assistant (part-time).
- **Shu-Kang Chang**, Telecommunications Assistant (part-time).

Other Changes

- **Pat Evans** has moved from Desktop support in Network and Microcomputer Systems to Assistant Manager of the Computing Center HelpDesk effective 11/1/99.

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Campus Computing News

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing

Dr. Baczewski is filling in as guest columnist for Dr. Leatherbury this month. -- Ed,

SPSS Y2K Issues on the Academic Mainframe

Academic Computing Services and the Computing Center cannot guarantee, at this time, that a fully functional version of the SPSS statistical analysis software will be available on the Academic IBM Mainframe after December 31, 1999. SPSS, Inc. has promised us a patch to the MVS batch version of SPSS which is supposed to address Y2K issues, however, the patch which was promised for September has yet to be released. We are not dropping support for SPSS on MVS, however, without the promised patch from SPSS Inc., it is doubtful that SPSS will remain fully functional on the Mainframe MVS batch system.

We strongly recommend that any data stored in SPSS system file format be converted to portable format before the end of December. Please note that source data or program files will be usable with minor changes on other platforms such as Macintosh, Windows, or UNIX. Information about converting system files to a portable format can be found in the recent *Benchmarks Online* column, "RSS Matters":

<http://www.unt.edu/benchmarks/archives/1999/october99/rss.htm>

We have some good news for those who did not manage to convert their SPSS CMS system file format data sets before the product expired at the end of September. SPSS Inc. has made it clear that they will not patch the CMS version in order to make it Y2K compliant which caused us to drop that version from our offerings this fiscal year. We have negotiated and received an extension to our SPSS/CMS license which will run through November 30, 1999. This will allow a last and final chance to convert CMS SPSS system files to a portable format. Please visit <http://www.unt.edu/rss/software/spsscms.htm> for more information in this regard.

If you require assistance with any of the operations recommended above, please contact the ACS Research and Statistical Support office at X. 2140 or X. 4166.

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Y2K — A Minor Hiccup or Major Indigestion?

By [Coy Hoggard](#), Senior Director of Administrative Computing and UNT
Y2K Remediation Coordinator

*This is Mr. Hoggard's second major article on the Year 2000 Computer Problem
for Benchmarks Online. Click [here](#) to read the first. -- Ed.*

So — What do YOU believe about Y2K?

Having discussed the "Y2K Problem" (or the "Year 2000 Computer Problem") with numerous people and having read numerous comments contained in various media sources, it seems to me that a very large percentage of the general population (excluding those of us who are or have been actively involved in working on the problem) fall pretty much into three categories regarding their opinions on this matter:

First are the few, but often very vocal people who profess to believe that Y2K problems will be widespread and extremely serious, perhaps even resulting in a collapse of our government and possibly the end of civilization as we know it. The people in this group advocate stockpiling food, water and other supplies in quantities adequate to sustain them for months or years. Some advocate relocating to remote rural areas and adopting a totally self-sufficient lifestyle. Some either already have or will arm themselves, preparing to defend their stockpiles from outsiders who have not made similar preparations. Included in this group are a number of individuals who hope to sell large quantities of the supplies that they recommend be stockpiled, often at prices significantly higher than the same or similar products can be purchased elsewhere. So, the sincerity of those who stand to benefit financially from widespread Y2K fears might be questionable. Some of these supplies vendors, however, are quite sincere in their beliefs and are just trying to be of service to other like-minded individuals. Some of the people who fit into this group are those who believe that January 1, 2000 will mark the beginning of a series of events leading to the end of the world as they interpret Biblical prophecies. Let's call this group the "Y2K Alarmists".

The second group that I identify are those who are equally as adamant in their belief, but whose beliefs are at the opposite end of the spectrum. These people are convinced that there is absolutely nothing to the whole "Y2K thing" — generally believing that the Y2K problem is a hoax perpetrated by someone — perhaps computer programmers planning to make huge amounts of money "correcting" a non-existing problem, or manufacturers of computer and other electronic equipment who have perpetrated the hoax in order to sell newer models of their equipment. The people in this group tend to see everyone who has any level of Y2K concerns as being a part of the unreasonably pessimistic group of Y2K alarmists. Let's refer to this group as the "Y2K scoffers."

In my third group I include those who don't quite know what to make of the whole issue. There might still be a few people who have not even heard about

Y2K — but surely only if they've been comatose for the past two years or more. The people in this group find the whole issue quite perplexing. They find it hard to fathom how such a seemingly simple problem could have widespread consequences, but they're not quite certain. They probably don't own a computer, so may assume that none of the Y2K issues apply to them. They may have initially had some concerns about the Y2K problem, but have heard from some of the Y2K scoffers how ridiculous it is to be concerned about Y2K and how gullible anyone would have to be in order to be "taken in" by this hoax, and have decided that this is a much more comfortable and believable position than the recommendations promoted by the Y2K alarmists. So, not wanting to appear foolish to their friends among the scoffers, and not being exactly sure what they should do anyway, they decide to do nothing to prepare for Y2K. But they may have just a bit of nagging concern regarding the wisdom of this decision. Let's call these folks the "perplexed."

Y2K Pragmatists

There is another group which at this time seems to be in the minority. The members of this group understand and believe that the Y2K issues are real and that if they had been left uncorrected would have caused major disruptions of services that all of us depend on daily in our modern society. This group includes those of us who have been (and/or still are) involved in correcting the Y2K problem for the organizations or businesses where we are employed. It also includes others who we have been exposed to and become convinced of the facts of the Y2K situation. The people in this group realize how severe the problem was (and still may be in some areas), but are aware of how much effort has been expended by qualified technicians in correcting this problem and how much money has been spent on the effort — both in salaries and replacement software and equipment. The people in this group also understand, however, that the magnitude and complexity of the project world-wide makes it impossible for anyone to be able to guarantee with certainty that there will be no Y2K-related failures and disruptions of services and business activities. The people in this group understand that even though the situation is not nearly so dismal as the Y2K alarmists predict, the situation is still uncertain enough to warrant making preparations to be pretty much self-sufficient for a few days, just in case there are some failures. Let's call this group the "Y2K pragmatists."

It seems that the people who are firmly entrenched in either the "Y2K alarmist" or the "Y2K scoffers" groups are often the ones who have very little factual information on which to base their opinion, and generally refuse to seriously consider any information which might influence them to change their position on this matter. They seem to me to have chosen their position on this issue based totally on blind faith rather than having assessed the facts and attempted to come to a rational conclusion. They have a "belief" about Y2K rather than an opinion based on a study and analysis of the available information. Many (perhaps most) of the people in these two groups seem to be emotionally attached to their point of view and can become quite agitated if anyone (particularly anyone whose position is at the opposite extreme) attempts to seriously discuss the Y2K issue with them. I have made, or assisted with, Y2K presentations to church, civic, and school PTA groups and have tried to express how much effort has been and is being expended on the Y2K problem, and how much progress has been made, etc. I then go on to say that, in general, things seem to be in pretty good shape as regards the Y2K issue but that there still

could be failures and that it is difficult to predict the impact of those failures. Afterwards I have heard individuals who heard the presentation debating the issue. Those who were alarmists remained alarmists, saying "Didn't you hear what he said? He agrees with me. He said that there will be failures!" The scoffers who also heard the presentation retort "Yes I heard what he said, he said that everything is in good shape, which is exactly what I've always thought." The members of the perplexed group who heard the presentation are usually listening to the debate between the alarmists and the scoffers and are still scratching their heads in bewilderment. I go away thinking that my presentation made absolutely no difference because the members of the audience all either thought that I agreed with the position they already held or else they didn't understand what I said. I've about come to the conclusion that my involvement in the Y2K project has prepared me for a political career.

I hope that I'm in the Y2K pragmatist group. That's certainly where I see myself, and where I intend to be positioned. I have frequent contact with other Y2K project managers at other organizations (both public and private sector) and am quite pleased, overall, with the effort that has been made in most of these organizations. I am also pleased with the level of competence exhibited, for the most part, by the people who are responsible for the Y2K projects at most of these organizations. Still, as compared to the number of businesses and organizations in this country (or in the world) who have been or will be affected by the Y2K problem, the number that I have personal knowledge of is minute. All of us who have had a major role in the Y2K remediation effort realize how large a task it has been (and continues to be at many places), how many millions of lines of program code have been examined and modified as needed, how many embedded systems have been evaluated, and we realize that the probability of all this having been completed in **EVEN ONE** of these businesses or organizations with no error or oversight is practically nil. So, if there is almost no chance that even one large business or organization has completed their Y2K remediation 100% error-free, then what is the chance that all of us collectively (including the vast majority of those organizations about which I have no direct knowledge) have accomplished a 100% error-free conversion? If it were possible for it to be less than a 0% probability, then that is what I would pick. **THERE WILL BE SOME Y2K-RELATED PROBLEMS** — there's just no other realistic possibility. Considering that we truly do have a global economy and considering how interconnected businesses are and how much we depend on suppliers for our daily operations, we must understand that failures of firms other than our own can have an impact on us. And, although the majority of the Y2K problems will likely occur at or shortly after the December 31, 1999 to January 1, 2000 crossover, some will not manifest themselves until later. Large numbers of computer processing cycles do not run every day. Some run weekly, monthly, quarterly, semesterly, semi-annually, annually, or simply "on-demand." This means that although these programs have (hopefully) been tested, they will not actually have run a production cycle until the first time such a processing cycle is scheduled or requested. And there's just something about real live production processing that seems to turn up a few additional "bugs" in computer programs that were not evident in testing — no matter how thoroughly the testers think they did their job. The good news, however, is that any computing organization of significant size experiences failures of their production processing more or less daily. That's why we all have "on call" programmers available to correct minor problems and get critical processing back on-track pretty much on a 24 hr. per day, 7 day per week basis. So long as the Y2K problems are not so numerous as to overwhelm qualified technical

staff available to deal with these problems, it is likely that most such problems may never even be obvious to the general public.

Although I know less about embedded chips and embedded processors than I know about business computer processing, I do know enough to understand that although date-related problems with these kinds of devices are relatively few and far between, some problems do exist. I seriously doubt that every single electronic card in every oil-producing well-head, in every single chemical plant, every single electrical generation plant, every single hospital or physician's office and every single telecommunications facility has been pulled, and that the individual electronic chips on those cards have been verified as Y2K ready. That does not necessarily mean that these unchecked devices will fail — but it does mean that we don't know for sure, and we probably don't know the full range of possible consequences. Just as with the computer programs used in routine business processing, these kinds of devices also have occasional failures. If you don't believe that, just ask yourself how many times you can remember having experienced a power outage, a loss of telephone service, failure of an ATM machine to provide cash on demand, etc. So, saying that some of these devices could fail at Y2K rollover does not necessarily mean catastrophic results. The impact will depend on the number of failures and the type of functions being performed by the device. And our personal perception of the severity of such failures may vary with whether any such failure affects us (or those who are close to us) in a direct manner. A failure of a kidney dialysis machine or other piece of critical medical equipment would be much more serious than a failure of my VCR (to use a trite example), but many of us still might consider a date-related failure of one single kidney dialysis machine somewhere in the world (or even in the nation) to be fairly minor (at least from a statistical perspective) unless that machine was connected to us or to someone that we know personally.

Less than 50 days and **counting** . . .

It is my opinion that the "Y2K alarmists" did all of us a valuable service early on by helping raise people's awareness of the Y2K issue. But it appears to me that even in the face of widespread awareness of the Y2K problem, the vast majority of the public is more or less complacent about the issue. Even if they're not truly Y2K scoffers, they do not really plan to make any personal preparations for the Y2K crossover. Perhaps fear of being ridiculed by their friends who are Y2K scoffers for being concerned enough to make any Y2K crossover plans contributes to this lack of preparation. Perhaps it's just procrastination or complacency. But I think that those of us who are in the Y2K pragmatist group — and particularly those of us who have some level of responsibility for Y2K projects - have contributed to this complacency by making essentially only positive statements about the situation. Many of us were concerned that there might be widespread panic which would result in inappropriate actions on the part of the public, such as withdrawing large sums of money from checking accounts, hoarding unreasonable quantities of food and supplies, etc. In short, many of us were afraid that the general public would become "Y2K alarmists" — and we have worked very hard and been perhaps too successful in allaying the fears of the general population. An Associated Press article which ran in the Wednesday, November 10, 1999 issue of the "Denton Record-Chronicle" discussed a "final status report on Y2K readiness" issued by the White House recently. The large, bold headlines read "Final report on Y2K readiness

reassuring." Very reassuring, and more cannon fodder for the scoffers, who will, in all likelihood read only the headline and proclaim "See — I told you that everything was going to be O.K. Probably never was any problem to begin with." But upon reading the entire article, one finds the following additional information: "But with just over 50 days remaining, the government's top experts also cautioned that local government, schools, hospitals and small businesses continue to lag on repairs, with the worst among them adopting a 'wait and see' stance toward expected failures." A similar article ran in the November 11, 1999 issue of the Dallas Morning-News. In that article (after the initial "good news" statements), the following comments appear:

... the government's final assessment of year 2000 problems notes that several local uncertainties remain around the country, particularly with schools, medical services and 911 emergency response systems. Survey respondents in all three categories showed at least one-third had not finished repairs.

Although it certainly could be worse, with less than 50 days remaining until the end of the year (including holidays and weekends) that is not, in my opinion, news worth cheering about.

In addition to the risk of technology-related failures, there is also a certain amount of risk of weather-related failures (if we have a winter storm at crossover time), and the public MIGHT assume that any such failures are Y2K-related. Additional problems should be anticipated simply because of this being the "mother of all new years eves" and the large number of celebrants who are likely to be out on the streets the night of December 31. Alex Petit, I.S. Director for the City of Denton asks the rhetorical question "If a drunk runs into a power pole and knocks out electricity for a section of the City, is that a Y2K problem?" Well, the answer is that it will be seen as a Y2K problem by some. Additional risk can be seen in the form of possible malicious mischief or even (God forbid) possible terrorist attacks. Although I do not have personal insight into this matter, I have seen reports on the Internet that the FBI is alerting law enforcement agencies to be aware of this possibility and advising them to take appropriate precautionary measures.

Be Prepared

I certainly do not want to see people panic and do foolish things, but I would like to see more people making plans and taking actions to allow them (and their families) to be essentially self-sufficient at, and for a reasonable period of time after, the Y2K crossover date. The American Red Cross recommends that people have on hand food, water, and other critical supplies in adequate amounts to be self-sustaining for a period of 72 hours. This is essentially the same as they recommend that we always have on hand so that we can take care of ourselves for that period of time in case of natural disasters. I can't argue with that, except that I think it would be prudent to prepare for a bit longer period than the Red Cross recommends. In an article titled "The Importance of local Preparedness," Dr. Leon Kappelman points out that emergencies and disasters are first managed locally. Federal organizations such as FEMA get involved only after local resources have been tapped. Kappelman comments that people depend on themselves first, then on their local VOADs (which I believe stands for Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster). Kappelman also says

that since Y2K presents the possibility that most localities will have some problems of their own, many calls for assistance may not be quickly honored, and this will strain VOAD and other resources, thus local preparedness is critically important. [Note: The referenced article can be found on the Web at <http://www.pbs.org/y2kontarget/kappelman.html> and URLs for Dr. Kappelman's site and other PBS information can be found in the article "[Y2K Links](#)"]

So, since there is a possibility that the resources of emergency assistance organizations will be stretched thin, it seems prudent to be prepared for just a little longer than the minimal Red Cross recommendation. On the other hand, if we would all REALLY do as much as the Red Cross recommends, I would feel much better about our ability to make it through this potentially "unnatural disaster" unscathed. (URL for Red Cross Web site can be found in the article "[Y2K Links](#)").

Someone might want to ask "Hoggard, do you really think things are going to be bad enough that we'll need those supplies?" My answer is "No, I really don't think the probability is very high that we will — but my confidence level is not so high but that I still believe that making the 72-hour preparation (per Red Cross recommendations) is the prudent thing to do." I do not have to absolutely believe that an event will happen in order to acknowledge the possibility. Following (and even going beyond) the Red Cross recommendations does not cost much, if any, additional money in the long run. Canned food with a long shelf life can be eventually used whether or not we have a Y2K-related emergency. Stored water can either be discarded when no longer needed or used for watering plants, pets, etc. Batteries (for radios, flashlights, etc.) will last for a fairly long period of time on our closet or pantry shelves, so will not be wasted. Officials from the vast majority of governmental units (city, county, state, and federal) say that they believe that they're "ready for Y2K." But they also go on to say that a certain level of individual and family preparation would be wise. Unfortunately, most of us seem to hear the first part of the message, but totally ignore the other, cautionary, part. If the City of Denton (just as an example) is concerned enough about the issue to recommend the precautions that they have (see "Dentonites Guide to Y2K" and other related documents — available on the City of Denton Web site [URL can be found in the article "[Y2K Links](#)"]) then I believe that as a citizen I have the responsibility to take their recommendations seriously, act on them, and perhaps go a bit further than their basic recommendations — just in case.

In most of our families, if we looked back one or two generations and learned about the customs and lifestyle of those people we would find that these folks routinely stockpiled food and other critical supplies. This was not necessarily done in preparation for any specific event so much as it was just a way of life. Being able to run to the store and easily purchase almost anything we want in a matter of minutes is a relatively recent phenomenon when looked at from a historical perspective. This lifestyle has resulted in our being much more dependent on someone else to provide critical, sometimes life-sustaining products and services than our grandparents or parents were. This dependence on others for critical products in our personal lives is somewhat analogous to the "just in time" delivery of materials for manufacturing processes which results in these firms having only minimal inventories of materials. This practice makes individuals and businesses more susceptible to any kind of disruptions of our supply chains. Many businesses are now building up inventories prior to the

Y2K crossover. As individuals we would be well advised to follow their lead.

One of my concerns is that the large number of people who are in the "perplexed" group will have made no preparations for the Y2K crossover. Then if there are ARE noticeable problems, they might quickly become convinced that the "Y2K alarmists" were right all along, and this COULD lead to significant panic and inappropriate actions on the part of people in this group. Those who are better prepared will have much less cause to panic in the face of any such problems. And if no such problems arise, then their preparations will have been merely low-cost insurance against that possibility — and the possibility is real whether or not problems actually occur.

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Y2K Links

By **Coy Hoggard**, Senior Director of Computing and UNT Y2K Remediation Coordinator

After reading "[Y2K -- A Minor Hiccup or Major Indigestion](#)," you may be interested in finding other sources of information on the Year 2000 Problem. Below are some URLs for Web sites which contain interesting and useful Y2K information.

- Y2K information for the City of Denton can be found at: <http://www.cityofdenton.com/y2k>
- American Red Cross — Contains recommendations for Y2K preparation: <http://www.redcross.org/disaster/safety/y2k.html>
- Site of UNT's Dr. Leon Kappelman, widely recognized Y2K expert contains, links to some of his and others' articles, links to other sites, etc.: <http://www.year2000.unt.edu/kappelma>
- Texas Department of Information Resources Y2K Project Office: <http://www.dir.state.tx.us/y2k/>
- Texas Department of Information Resources — previous meetings — links and slides from past presentations (just click on underlined entries): <http://www.dir.state.tx.us/y2k/workgroup/workgrmtgs/index.htm>
- Year 2000 Public Information Clearinghouse — Y2K Guidebooks: <http://www.dir.state.tx.us/y2k/publicinfo/guidebooks.htm>
- U.S. Dept. of Transportation: <http://www.dot.gov/technology.htm>
- Wells Fargo: <http://www.wellsfargo.com/y2k>
- A small business study done by Wells Fargo: <http://www.wellsfargo.com/press/press980526/>
- PBS (site contains links to articles & other relevant sites): <http://www.pbs.org/y2kontarget/>
- Link to Dr. Leon Kappelman article "The Importance of Local Preparedness": <http://www.pbs.org/y2kontarget/kappelman.html>
- Giga Information Group: <http://www.gigaweb.com>
- Readiness 2000 — A Coalition of Texas State Agencies Promoting Y2K Preparedness: <http://readiness2000.state.tx.us>
- Texas Department of Banking (has Y2K FAQ w/ questions, answers, and referral numbers): <http://www.banking.state.tx.us>
- The Y2K Problem: Twenty Five Things to Expect During the Rest of 1999

By Warren S. Reid, posted October 22, 1999:

<http://www.year2000.com/y2kcurrent1.html> or:

<http://www.year2000.com/archive/NFwhatto.html>

- Look at IBM's Year 2000 section for a great rollover planning guide:
<http://www.ibm.com/ibm/year2000/>
- Consumer Information, including a Y2K checklist: www.consumer.gov/y2k/
- News, awareness, advice: <http://www.y2kspecialist.com/>
- These are fun to look at, whether or not you're interested in buying anything:
<http://www.lehmans.com/>
- Citizen's Action Guide from Utne Reader:
[http://www.utne.com/bY2k.tmpl\\$search?db=dArticle.db&eqheadlinedata=Y2K%20Citizen%27s%20Action%20Guide](http://www.utne.com/bY2k.tmpl$search?db=dArticle.db&eqheadlinedata=Y2K%20Citizen%27s%20Action%20Guide)
- U.S. State Dept. — plethora of links on travel, gov't, aviation, personal preparedness, food/water, health, energy, communications, finance, transportation, shipping, international: <http://travel.state.gov/y2kca.html>
- Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission:
<http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/y2k/y2k.html>
- The Better Business Bureau's Year 2000 and You:
<http://www.bbb.org/library/y2k.html>
- U.S. Small Business Administration Y2K help:
<http://www.sbaonline.sba.gov/y2k>
- American Petroleum Institute: www.api.org
- Texas A&M report on chemical safety:
<http://www.humanitarian.net/y2keconomic.html>
- Free Y2K technical bulletin: www.swbooks.com/pubs/bulletins/link.htm
- TechWeb Year 2000 Countdown, lots of technical articles:
<http://www.techweb.com/wire/technews/year2000.html>
- U.S. Postal Service: <http://www.usps.com/year2000/>
- In a State of Texas Public Service Announcement, the Citizens of Tuna, Texas remind us that "it's the start of a great new millennium, not the end of the world." (Y2K — Don't Panic, be Ready) (files in RealVideo format):
<http://readiness2000.state.tx.us/psa.html>
- Y2K Countdown Clock, and more: [Countdown to the Year 2000](http://www.countdown2000.com)

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Junk Mail and Hoax Viruses*

By [Wil Clark](#), ACS General Access Lab Manager and Campus Virus Guru

My aunt E-mailed this to me recently. It is a little ironic because she has forwarded the majority of the messages addressed here. Unfortunately I do not know who to credit but if you wrote this you are here by duly credited. Enjoy.

Whoever decided to create this note and forward it on should receive some type of humanitarian award. It says it all!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

1. Big companies don't do business via chain letters. Bill Gates is not giving you \$1000, and Disney is not giving you a free vacation. There is no baby food company issuing class-action checks. Procter and Gamble is not part of a satanic cult or scheme, and its logo is not satanic. MTV will not give you backstage passes if you forward something to the most people. You can relax; there is no need to pass it on "just in case it's true." Furthermore, just because someone said in a message, four generations back, that "we checked it out and it's legit," does not actually make it true.

2. There is no kidney theft ring in New Orleans. No one is waking up in a bathtub full of ice, even if a friend of a friend swears it happened to their cousin. If you are hell-bent on believing the kidney-theft ring stories, please see: <http://urbanlegends.tqn.com/library/weekly/aa062997.htm> And I quote: "The National Kidney Foundation requests for actual victims of organ thieves to come forward and tell their stories. None have." That's "none" as in "zero." Not even your friend's cousin.

3. Neiman Marcus doesn't really sell a \$200 cookie recipe. And even if they do, we all have it. And even if you don't, you can get a copy at: <http://www.bl.net/forwards/cookie.html> Then, if you make the recipe, decide the cookies are that awesome, feel free to pass the recipe on.

4. If the latest NASA rocket disaster(s) DID contain plutonium that went to particulate over the eastern seaboard, do you REALLY think this information would reach the public via an AOL chain-letter?

5. There is no "Good Times" virus. In fact, you should never, ever, ever forward any email containing any virus warning unless you first confirm that an actual site of an actual company that actually deals with viruses. Try: <http://www.norton.com> . And even then, don't forward it. We don't care. And you cannot get a virus from a flashing IM or email, you have to download....ya know, like, a FILE!

6. There is no gang initiation plot to murder any motorist who flashes headlights at another car driving at night without lights.

7. If you're using Outlook, IE, or Netscape to write email, turn off the "HTML encoding." Those of us on Unix shells can't read it, and don't care enough to save the attachment and then view it with a web browser, since you're probably forwarding us a copy of the Neiman Marcus Cookie Recipe anyway.

8. If you still absolutely MUST forward that 10th-generation message from a friend, at least have the decency to trim the eight miles of headers showing everyone else who's received it over the last 6 months. It sure wouldn't hurt to get rid of all the ">" that begin each line either. Besides, if it has gone around that many times we've probably already seen it

9. Craig Shergold (or Sherwood, or Sherman, etc.) in England is not dying of cancer or anything else at this time and would like everyone to stop sending him their business cards. He apparently is no longer a "little boy" either.

10. The "Make a Wish" foundation is a real organization doing fine work, but they have had to establish a special toll free hot line in response to the large number of Internet hoaxes using their good name and reputation. It is distracting them from the important work they do.

11. If you are one of those insufferable idiots who forwards anything that "promises" something bad will happen if you "don't," then something bad will happen to you if I ever meet you in a dark alley.

12. Women really are suffering in Afghanistan, and PBS and NEA funding are still vulnerable to attack (although not at the present time) but forwarding an e-mail won't help either cause in the least. If you want to help, contact your local legislative representative, or get in touch with Amnesty International or the Red Cross. As a general rule, e-mail "signatures" are easily faked and mean nothing to anyone with any power to do anything about whatever the competition is complaining about. (P.S.: There is no bill pending before Congress that will allow long-distance companies to charge you for using the Internet.)

Bottom Line... composing e-mail or posting something on the Net is as easy as writing on the walls of a public restroom. Don't automatically believe it until it's proven false... ASSUME it's false, unless there is proof that it's true.

Now, forward this message to ten friends, and you will win the Publishers Clearinghouse sweepstakes. ;-) >>

Now that you know the whole story, you can enjoy the next message sent to you without feeling compelled to forward it to everyone you know.

* For more information on Internet myths and hoaxes, see this month's ["Network Connection"](#).

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Is Your Website in Compliance?

By [Sharon Marek](#), Web Developer UNT Central Web Support

There are guidelines for Web publishing at the University of North Texas. These guidelines are just as important and relevant today as they were in July of 1997. Rather than specifying technological limits or restrictions, these guidelines rightly focus on presentation and communication. Please review these guidelines in conjunction with your own Websites.

Any questions about UNT's Web Publishing Guidelines or how to incorporate these elements in your Website can be sent to www@unt.edu

University of North Texas Web Publishing Guidelines

To ensure professional-quality Web pages that are produced for official uses at the University, the following Web publishing guidelines have been adopted by the Information Resources Council (at its July 15, 1997 meeting.) These guidelines are provided to assist you in creating Web pages that further the University's teaching, research, and service mission.

1. Use the University wordmark on each *home* page.

It is necessary that each home page indicate the University's name in the wordmark format, which is the University's name in a special form (Times Bold, 90 percent width, upper and lower case, one line only.) For text-only browsing, an alternate tag with the University's name should be provided with the link to the wordmark image file. Various sizes of the wordmark image are located at <http://www.unt.edu/images/>.

2. Sign each *home* page with the name and title of person responsible for the document.

It is important that you identify who is responsible for the content, and that you provide any copyright information, if there is any. In some cases you may want to reference both the author of the original document and the person who is responsible for the electronic version.

3. Date *each* page and spell out the name of the month in which it was last updated.

(i.e., *Last updated on December 5, 1995*) . While the United States uses month/day/year, the rest of the world uses day/month/year, therefore it is best to spell it out.

4. Include a complete phone number with area code (i.e., [940] 565-2324) where appropriate (such as on the home page of an academic department that prospective students might call.)

Remember that not everyone in the world knows UNT's area code.

5. Include a "back" link or button at the end of every document.

Home pages should have "Home", "Search", and "Help" buttons link to the appropriate UNT pages. All other pages should have links that take the user back to the functional area home page or to UNT's home page.

Some people might go directly to a document through a Web search and you should make it easy for them to find additional information about your department or the University.

6. Include a feedback link on *each* page for comments, suggestions, and corrections.

Visitors to your pages may have questions or comments and if you make it easy for them to contact you, they are more likely to have a positive impression of your pages as well as of the university.

7. Keep graphics small in both size and number.

Remember that many people access our site over dial-up lines and a 50 KB graphic file takes at least 28 seconds to download over a 14.4KB modem. Various UNT logos may be found at <http://www.unt.edu/images/>. Also, remember that most clip art is copyrighted and you must obtain permission to use it. If you do use it with permission, give the proper credit to the artwork by showing the owner's name.

8. Be realistic about what you are able to publish and maintain on the Web.

Review the links on each of your pages at least every month and update links and contents as needed. Software to perform the link checking is available to assist with that task: check with the UNT Web Administrator for recommendations about the best product to use. While some material is more time-sensitive than others, most information ages and is useful only for a limited time unless it is updated. If the person responsible for the page is notified of outdated information, he/she is expected to make corrections within a week. Note that [UNT's Web Publishing Policy](#) assigns ownership and responsibility for the accuracy of Web publications.

9. Check the spelling and grammar on all material before you put it on the Web server.

Poor spelling and bad grammar give a very negative impression of an educational institution!

10. Link to the university's affirmative action, equal opportunity employer and Americans with Disabilities statement or abbreviation (AA/EOE/ADA) from each college or department home page.

The statement can be found at <http://www.unt.edu/aaeoeada.html>.

UNT's Web Publishing Guidelines were written by [Maurice Leatherbury](#), Chair of UNT's Team Web and Director of Academic Computing Services.

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Having Trouble Finding Things?

By [Shane Jester](#), Central Web Support

UNT's [new search engine](#) has a slightly different look and feel from the previous version. Following are some tips to narrowing your search results in an effort to retrieve more accurate information from the search engine.

The first trick is knowing how to search for your results. Are you looking for a general topic or for a specific issue or word? If you are looking for a general topic, you should select the **ALL** Option from the **Match** list box. This will instruct the search engine to search for any occurrences of the word or words in your query. (i.e. a search for John Doe would return a list of results that contained both the words John and Doe somewhere in the document. If you are only looking for an occurrence of either of the two words you should select the **OR** option.

If you need a more narrow search (i.e. a phase search, or full name search) you should select the **Boolean** option from the **Match** list box. A boolean search allows you to customize your search using various ANDs, ORs and NOTs. The following are some examples of boolean searches:

John and Doe	- searches for instances of John Doe
cat not dog	- searches for instances of cat but not dog
cat or (dog not nose)	- searches for any instances of cat or instances of dog without the word nose

(Note that the operator **not** has the meaning of 'without')

Additionally, you may specify other options including the format of the results and the order the results are listed based upon characteristics such as date and relevance. You can access the online hints page which has some additional details and hints at <http://www.unt.edu/search/hints.html>